Legislative
Assembly
of Saskatchewan

Legislative Building

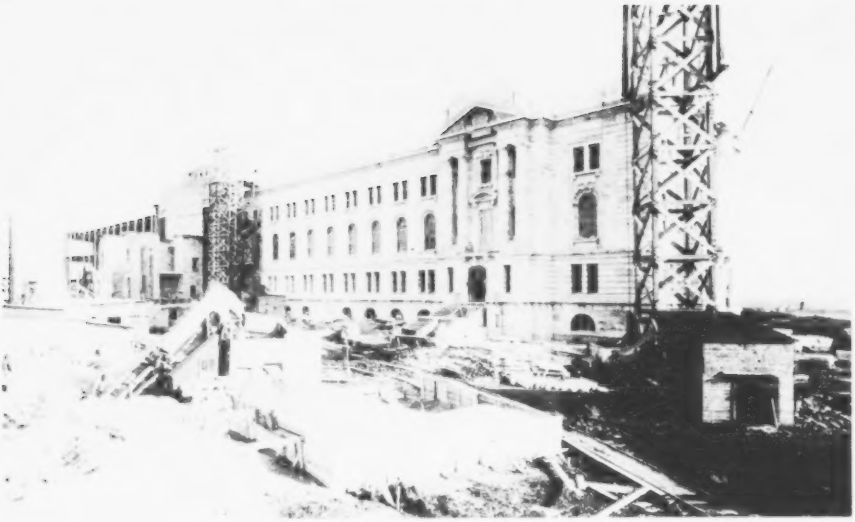

Photo Credit: Saskatchewan Archives Board

Saskatchewan's Legislative Building is a beautiful and majestic structure. Nestled in a park-like setting on the shores of Regina's Wascana Lake, it is a symbol of the spirit which has come to characterize Saskatchewan people. The harmonious blend of materials from Canada and abroad is a lasting tribute to the people from many nations who have contributed to the growth and development of Saskatchewan.

E. & W. S. Maxwell of Montreal, architects for the building, took a free adaptation of English Renaissance style with elements of Louis XVI. Many aspects of the building are strongly reminiscent of the Palace of Versailles.

The original 67 hectare site of the Legislative Building was the beginning of the 1 100 hectare Wascana Centre, the world's largest urban park. Construction of the Legislative Building began on August 31, 1908 by Peter Lyall and Sons of Montreal. Three hundred men worked day and night for a year and a half to prepare the Tyndal stone facing. The corner-stone was laid on October 4, 1909 by His Excellency Earl Grey, Governor General of Canada. On October 12, 1912 the building was officially opened by His Royal Highness, the Duke of Connaught. The final cost of construction was approximately $1.8 million.

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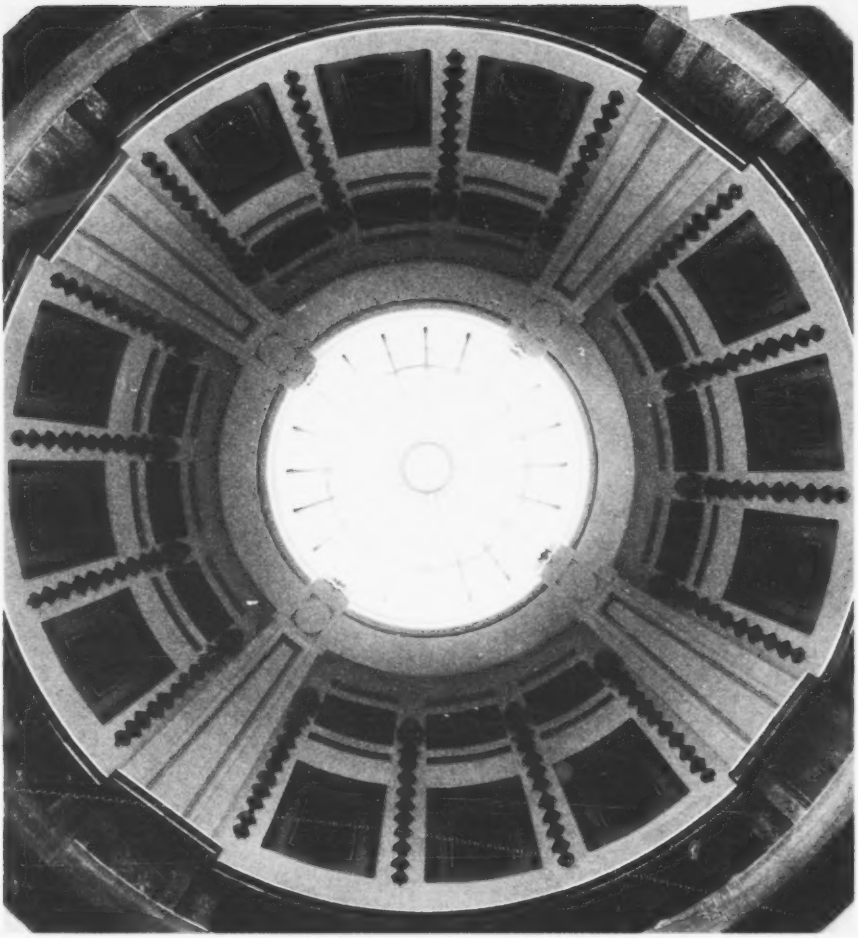
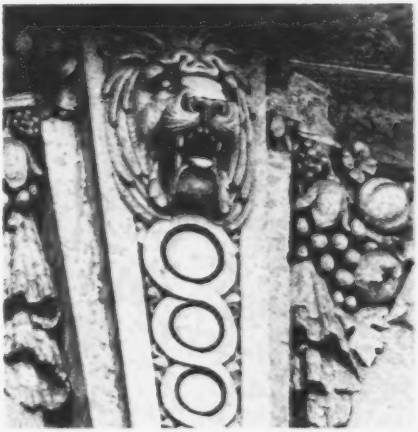


Interior of dome, Legislative Building.

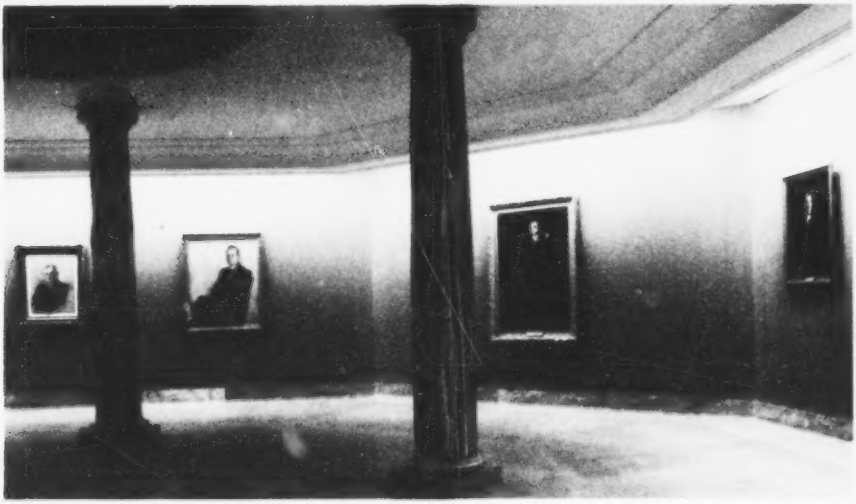


The intricate carvings on the building exterior were executed by the Bromsgrove Guild of England. Gargoyles, lions' heads, and chains of interwoven grains and fruits adorn the building. Gracing the main entrance is the allegorical carving entitled "Progress". An immigrant and a native flank Canada, depicted as a woman fostering and protecting the development of each. Because the building was completed during the reign of King George V, carvings bear the inscription of GR for Georgius Rex.

Designed in the shape of a cross, the Legislative Building is approximately 165 metres in length and 84 metres in width. Arches and artistic ceiling designs draw the eye upward to the 33 metre tower and dome. From ground level to the top of the dome is 53 metres. Of particular interest in the main rotunda, beneath the dome, is the marble well. It is constructed of Swedish marble and is similar to the tomb of Napoleon in Les Invalides, Paris. Located near the well is a bronze bust of the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker, Prime Minister of Canada from 1957 to 1963. The homestead buildings where Diefenbaker grew up are located elsewhere in Wascana Centre. They were moved from their original location at Borden, Saskatchewan.

Thirty-four types of marble were used in construction. The main stairway is made of white veined marble from Philipsburg, Quebec. The marble on the walls is from Italy, the floor from Vermont, and baseboards and the bases of the pillars from Ireland. The pillars and columns were quarried on the island of Cyprus, then cut and shaped in Quebec. The large pillars are 8 metres in height and weigh 4 500 kilograms each, while the shorter pillars are 5.5 metres high and weigh 3 200 kilograms each.

The mural above the rotunda is titled, "Before The White Man Came". John Leman, an employee of the Department of Public Works painted it in 1933. The scene depicts the Qu'Appelle Valley with a hunting party preparing to attack a herd of buffalo on the opposite side of the lake.



Display galleries on the ground and first floor levels have been named after major water systems in the province: the Saskatchewan, Assiniboine, Athabasca, Qu'Appelle, Souris and Churchill. The galleries exhibit portraits of former Premiers, Speakers, Lieutenant Governors, members of the Legislative Assembly and Saskatchewan aboriginal people.

The Walker — Pimotat
Algonkin-Cree-Sask.

Chief Pie-A-Pot
Algonkin-Cree-Sask.

Chief Poundmaker
Pee-Too-Kah-Han
Algonkin-Cree-Sask.

Big Darkness
Assiniboine-Sask.

The Edmund Morris Collection, featuring pastel drawings which represent various tribes in Saskatchewan, was completed in 1911 for the Government of Saskatchewan.

The Legislative Assembly Chamber is a crown-shaped room panelled in finely carved oak and Irish marble. In 1978 the Chamber was renovated, the wood work was stripped of its old varnish and refinished, and a new ventilating system and high quality sound system were installed.

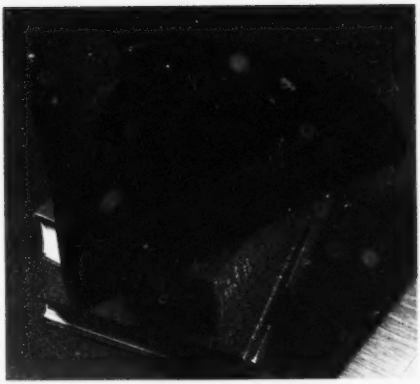
The large portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II hanging above the Speaker's throne is a 1.2 metre by 2.4 metre gilt-framed copy of Britain's official state portrait. This copy was painted by John Alford who worked from the original portrait by James Gunn.

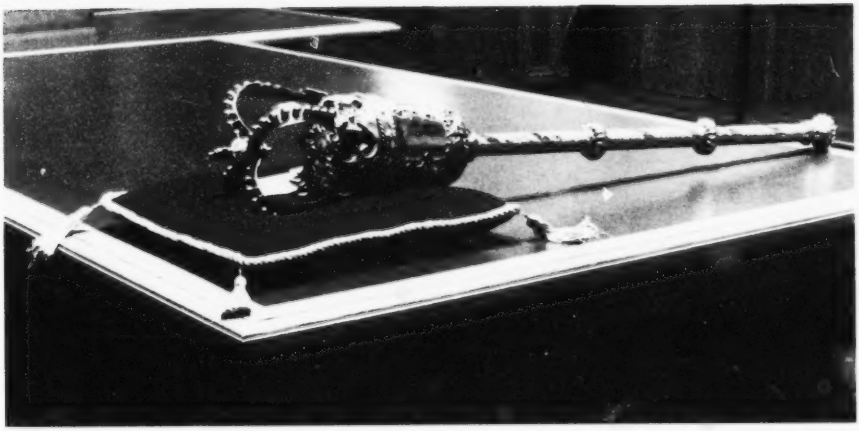
In December, 1982, a highly automated, broadcast-quality television system was installed in the Legislature. The system consists of five remotely controlled television cameras mounted on motorized camera heads which are recessed in the corners of the Chamber with one housed above the main entrance door. The television system is operated from a sophisticated television control centre located directly adjacent to the north-west corner of the Chamber.

The entire proceedings are broadcast live to major centres in the province and recorded on audio/video tape as a permanent record to be stored in the provincial archives.

The system was modelled after the House of Commons television system but utilized a considerably more advanced technology than was available when the House of Commons system was installed.

The Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly Television system has since become the model for Legislatures all over the world who are considering televising their proceedings.





The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly sits on a hand-carved oak throne which originally belonged to the first Speaker of Saskatchewan's Legislature. Carved oak and an exquisite gold tapestry surround the Speaker's throne. The intricate oak carvings were executed by a craftsman who had previously worked on Westminster Abbey, London, England. The tapestry was hand embroidered by two Sisters in a Montreal convent.

Flanking the Speaker's chair are portrait statuettes of Sir John A. MacDonald and Sir Louis Lafontaine. Both men were prominent in early Canadian history.

When the Legislature is in session, the Speaker of the Assembly wears a tricorn hat for the traditional *Speaker's Parade*. The Sergeant-at-Arms carries the Mace which is a symbol of the authority of the House. Purchased in 1906, the gold plated Mace is 1.2 metres long and weighs 16 kilograms. It bears the Royal Coat of Arms and is decorated with wheat sheaves and beavers. It is inscribed with two inscriptions.

"Honi soit qui mal y pense" and *"A mari usque ad mari"*
"Evil be to him who evil thinks" and *"From sea to sea"*.

Premier's Outer Office

The Premier's Office has served twelve Premiers. They are Honourable W. Scott, 1905-16; Honourable W. Martin, 1916-22; Honourable C. Dunning, 1922-26; Honourable J. Gardiner, 1926-29, 1935; Honourable J. Anderson, 1929-34; Honourable W. Patterson, 1935-44; Honourable T. Douglas, 1944-61; Honourable W. Lloyd, 1961-64; Honourable W. Thatcher, 1964-71; Honourable A. Blakeney, 1971-82; Honourable G. Devine, 1982-91; and Honourable Roy Romanow, 1991 to present.

Cabinet Room

Cabinet Meetings are held in this room. The ceiling is of a stepped designed with gilded decorative plaster. The walls are panelled with brocade tapestry of a classical style suiting the decor. The carpet, which is specially woven for the room, features the provincial floral emblem at two of the corners and Saskatchewan's Shield directly in front of the fireplace. The carved panel above the fireplace is the work of a French-Canadian artisan. The marble in the fireplace is "Alps Green" from Switzerland. Saskatchewan's shield is displayed in the brass fittings of the fireplace.

Cabinet Lounge

The Cabinet Lounge, or former "apartment" of the lieutenant-governor, is the only room in the Legislative Building that is finished in mahogany rather than oak. The walls are paneled in a beautiful old gold brocade tapestry.

The original cabinet table sits in a corner of the room, it is surrounded by old-style wooden chairs.

This room is used by Cabinet as a lounge in conjunction with Cabinet meetings. It is also used as a meeting room by the Premier and Cabinet committees.

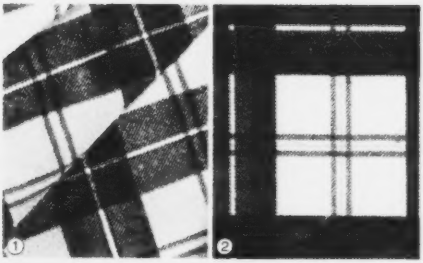
The Legislative Library provides a parliamentary library service to Members of the Legislative Assembly. Its unique collections are also available to government employees and the public of Saskatchewan. The collection is comprised of close to one-half million bound volumes that includes books, government publications, microforms and periodical subscriptions.

The historic Legislative Library Reading Room was the site of the first session held in the building, and continues to display various historic artifacts including: a table reputedly used at the Quebec Conference in 1864 which led to the drafting of the British North America Act; charred remains from the British House of Commons from the World War II bombing of the Chamber; and a roll-top desk and filing cabinet used by Saskatchewan's first Premier, Walter Scott.

Dominating the formal walk from the shores of Wascana Lake to the eastern entrance of the Legislative Building is the beautiful Trafalgar Fountain.

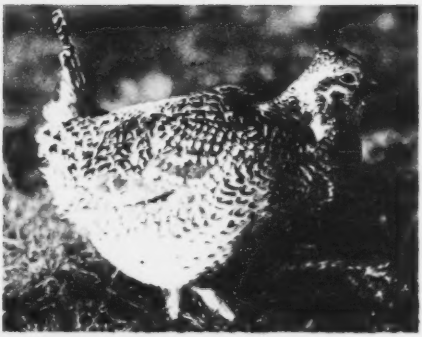
This fountain is one of a pair designed by Sir Charles Barry, Architect of the Houses of Parliament, London, England. The fountains stood in London's Trafalgar Square from 1845 to 1939 when they were replaced by a larger pair. This fountain was officially dedicated in 1963 to the founding of the North West Mounted Police headquarters in Regina in 1882. The other fountain is in Ottawa.

The fountain is constructed of red granite from Scotland. It is centred on an octagonal base of coloured terrazzo. Located in the Legislative Building grounds are memorials to two former Premiers of Saskatchewan: Honourable Woodrow S. Lloyd, Premier from 1961 to 1964; and Honourable W. Ross Thatcher, Premier from 1964 to 1971. There is also a memorial to the men and women who fought in the First World War 1914 to 1918.

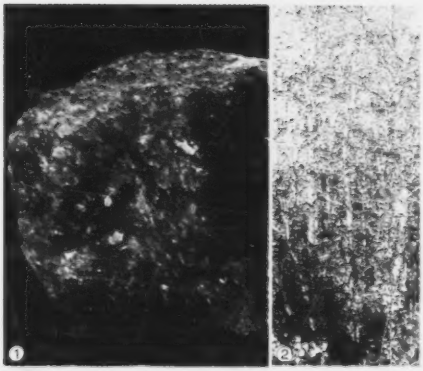


① Saskatchewan's official tartan was formally registerred in 1961. It has seven different colours: gold to represent the wheat fields; brown for summer fallow; green for our forest resources; red to signify the provincial floral emblem; yellow for fields of rapeseed or canola; white for the winter snow; and black to represent oil, coal, and our mineral wealth.
② The Saskatchewan dress tartan was introduced in 1997 for competitive highland dancers on the occasion of the Canadian Interprovincial Highland Dancing Championships held that year in Regina. It is a variant of the original provincial tartan, with the off-white line of the original tartan becoming the background colour of the dress version.

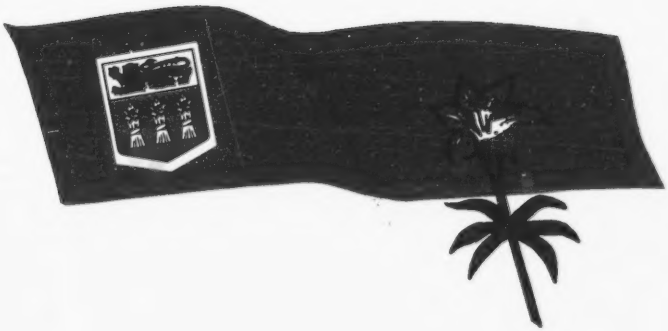
In 1941, the *Lilium Philadelphicum Andinum* was selected as the provincial floral emblem. Commonly known as the Western Red Lily or Prairie Lily, it was once widespread throughout Saskatchewan. With indiscriminate picking and the extension of agricultural lands it has all but disappeared from most areas, prompting the declaration of the Western Red Lily as a protected flower. It is an offence to transplant, pick, uproot or in any way damage the plant wherever it may be found.



The Prairie Sharp-Tailed Grouse, *Pedioecetes Phasianellus Campestris,* was chosen as the second provincial emblem in 1945. Often referred to incorrectly as the prairie chicken, it is a common and very popular game bird.



① Potash was chosen as the provincial mineral following a province-wide competition open to grade eight school students. It was announced by the Minister of Energy and Mines in February, 1996, and given official status by amendments to The Provincial Emblems and Honours Act in May 1997.
② The white birch is easily recognized by its chalk white papery bark which peels off the trunk in strips. In 1988 the white birch, known botanically as *betula papyrifers*, was adopted as the official tree of Saskatchewan. The hardwood tree is found across the northern part of the province.



On September 22, 1969 Saskatchewan's flag was officially dedicated. The flag features the Saskatchewan Shield in the upper quarter nearest the staff with the provincial floral emblem in the fly, the half farthest from the staff. The green on the upper half of the flag represents Saskatchewan's abundant forest and natural resources. The golden lower half symbolizes the fields of wheat and grain. The flag was adapted from designs submitted to a province wide contest.

Shield: The lower portion of the province's Armorial Bearing consists of three golden sheaves of wheat framed against a green background. The upper area portrays a red lion on a gold background. The colours chosen are significant. Red suggests the fires that swept the prairies before the advent of civilization. Green represents the luxuriant grass and other vegetation, and gold is the symbol for fields of ripening grain.

Saskatchewan Coat of Arms: On September 16, 1986, at a ceremony in the Legislative Chamber in Regina, the augmented armorial bearings were authorized by The Queen through a Royal Warrant. Below the shield is a *compartment* of western red lilies, supporting a *scroll* with the provincial *motto* MULTIS E GENTIBUS VIRES — Latin for "From Many Peoples Strength".

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